

California Polytechnic State University

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For Change, Mesh Engineering and Anthropology, Speaker Says in Provocative Perspectives Session

CAL POLY -- Universities located in small towns have a unique opportunity to shape students, but university environments tend to be “the most difficult places to change in the universe,” according to Don Beck, Ph.D. and co-founder of the National Values Center in Denton, Texas.

By perpetuating a “silo” approach to learning, universities miss the opportunity to help solve complex problems. “You can’t solve racism, for example, by just dealing with race,” Denton explained.

Universities should teach thinking processes that are more holistic and integrated, he argues, and society should move beyond arguing about theories to understanding how human mindsets and world views evolve.

Beck, who has consulted with numerous world leaders including Nelson Mandella, advocates applying scientific principles to the study of human nature, a “meshing” of engineering and anthropology. “We don’t need any more politicians or spiritual leaders. What we do need is to re-engineer the whole world,” he said.

He believes that the “consensus-model,” where everyone has their say, becomes the blind leading the blind, with everybody falling into the ditch, if it stops there. “After everyone sits in a circle and expresses their point of view, then what? Just having dialog doesn’t get us where we need to go. A whole new way of solving problems has got to emerge, one which has more features of engineering thinking,” he said.

Cal Poly, with its polytechnic focus, is well situated for taking the leading the effort to align resources with problems. “Paradox resolution is very much like engineering thinking, which is already there in the engineering textbooks. It needs to be meshed with human dynamics. Building bridges physically is the same as building bridges psychologically,” he added.

For more information about “adult biopsychosocial system development,” go to www.spiraldynamics.net or www.globalvaluesnetwork.com.

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California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407